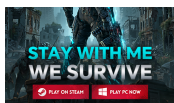


Human Rights Commission quit post early



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THE head of the nation's human rights watchdog has announced she will quit her post in July.

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THE head of the nation's human rights watchdog has announced she will quit her post in July.

Australian Human Rights Commission president Catherine Branson's five-year term was due to expire in October next year.

A spokeswoman for Ms Branson said she had decided to step down 15 months early to spend more time with her family.

Ms Branson commutes to Sydney from her home town of Adelaide. Her husband and elderly parents live in Adelaide.

Ms Branson commenced her five-year term as President in October 2008.

Federal Attorney-General Nicola Roxon thanked Ms Branson for her service

President Branson has held the position of President with distinction, since October 2008 and Human Rights Commissioner since July 2009 and has advised the Government of her intention to step down at the end of July 2012 to enable her to spend more time with family.

"The Government thanks President Branson for her dedication and hard work in leading the Commission and her passionate advocacy for the rights of all Australians, particularly those most vulnerable in our society," Ms Roxon said.

"President Branson has led the Commission's increased role in building greater understanding and respect for human rights in our community, a key plank of Australia's Human Rights Framework.

She said the government would release information about the process for recruiting a replacement for Ms Branson in due course.

Former Attorney-General Robert McClelland also thanked Ms Branson for her service.

"President Branson presided over a period of great collaboration between the Commission and the Government on the development of Australia's Human Rights Framework," Mr McClelland said.

"I thank her for constructive input into a range of key reforms.

Prior to her role as Human Rights Commission president, Ms Branson was a Federal Court judge.